

SN 10/621,249

ATTORNEY DOCKET No. SUYE:001

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests that the foregoing amendments be made prior to examination of the present application, and respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and the reasons that follow.

Claims 1-6 are pending. Claim 1 has been withdrawn from consideration and has been canceled. Claims 2 and 5 have been amended. Support for the amendments to claim 2 are found in the second and last full paragraphs on page 8, in the paragraph bridging pages 8 and 9, and in the first full paragraph on page 14. Claims 7 and 8 have been added. New claim 7 is supported by the paragraph bridging pages 8 and 9 of the specification and the first full paragraph on page 11. New claim 8 is supported by pages 12 and 13. Claims 2-8 remain in the case for further examination. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

Claim 1 has been withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected invention, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Claim 1 has been canceled.

Claims 2-6 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Langois (US 4,125,582). The examiner urges that Langois teaches a method of making marbled parts using a melt stream of multiple colors of thermoplastic materials, and that the apparatus comprises the claimed screw component. He takes the position that the essential difference between the claimed process and the process taught by the prior art is the addition of a colored transparent layer over the molded structure to control the color of the article, and that it is common to coat plastic structures with a transparent color layer in order to change the color of the object. He notes that this is often done for a structure in which one wants aspects of the surface to show through, e.g., a metallized structure, and therefore concludes that it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to have coated the articles taught by Langois with a transparent color layer depending on the

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color of the object desired. He further argues that the color provides no function other than esthetics and such a change would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made since changes in color are well within the ordinary skill of the art and merely a design choice. Regarding various features recited in claims 2-6, the examiner states that it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to have varied the processing conditions and choices of the plastic materials depending on what appearance was desired.

Thus, according to the Examiner, an "injection molding process" as recited in claim 2 is disclosed in Langois (US 4,125,582). The Examiner also urges that a colored clear coating process" of claim 2 is within the ordinary skill of the art and merely a design choice

However, the colored clear coating process" of claim 2 is not within the ordinary skill of the art and is not merely a design choice. Because the "colored clear coating process" of the present claims is carried out after an "injection molding process for forming flow patterns," the ground color and the flow patterns of an injection-molded article can be adjusted to the hue of a desired final product. The claimed sequence of steps produces flow patterns that have depth and clarity, while maximizing the flow patterns of the injection-molded article obtained by the "injection molding process," and unevenness of the flow patterns of the injection-molded article in color can be obscured.

Surfaces of an injection-molded article formed of synthetic resin have been conventionally coated. However, in opaque color coating which is commonly carried out, the ground color and flow patterns on the surface of the injection-molded article are hidden by the coating layer. Sometimes, clear coating by a transparent coating is carried out on a surface of an injection-molded article. However, as a colorless clear coating puts a shine on the surface of the injection-molded article, or is merely used to protect the surface, the ground color or the color of flow patterns appears on the surface of the article as it is.

On the other hand, the present invention "spreads a colored clear paint of a color different from the ground color of the base material over the surface of the injection-molded

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article having the flow patterns" so that the respective hues of the ground color and the flow patterns and the hue of the colored clear paint are combined. The result is a resin product that has flow patterns adjusted to a desired product color.

For example, if the ground color of the injection-molded article is green or khaki, and the flow patterns are a mixed color of red and black, when a light brown colored clear coating is used to carry out the colored clear coating process, the ground color and flow patterns of the injection-molded article are superimposed with the colored clear coating, and are changed to brown flow patterns having a beautiful contrast and shine. This emphasizes the contrast of the flow patterns. As a result, a beautiful shiny surface which looks as if growth rings of a rigid old tree have been polished can be obtained. By a visual effect of the colored clear layer coated on the flow patterns, the clarity and depth of the flow patterns are increased and compared to flow patterns of merely an injection-molded article, and a flow pattern having an exceedingly elegant hue and depth can be obtained. Due to this, the commercial value of a resin product used in interior trim materials of an automobile can be raised.

The examiner has cited no art that used a colored clear coating process, let alone one that is used to affect the hues of a ground color and the flow patterns therein in a resin product as presently claimed. The use of a "colored clear coating process" which uses "a colored clear paint of a color different from the ground color of the base material," as recited in claim 2 has not been disclosed and would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art. No *prima facie* case of obvious exists. Moreover, the combination of steps recited in claim 2 produces advantages that would not have been expected based on the art of record, and rebut any inference that the present invention would have been obvious.

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

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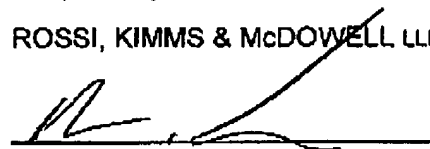
If there are any problems with this response, Applicant's attorney would appreciate a telephone call. In view of the foregoing, it is believed none of the references, taken singly or in combination, disclose the claimed invention. Accordingly, this application is believed to be in condition for allowance, the notice of which is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

ROSSI, KIMMS & McDOWELL LLP

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DATE


MARC A. ROSSI
REG. NO. 31,923

P.O. Box 826
ASHBURN, VA 20146-0826
703-726-6020 (PHONE)
703-726-6024 (FAX)